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THE LAY-MAN'S MAGAZINE.

"THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND—AND THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF."

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Some opinion of the value of the following work, may be formed from a knowledge of the fact, that it has been translated into various languages, and above five hundred thousand copies of it, distributed, within less than three years.

THE
DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER,
AN AUTHENTIC AND INTERESTING
NARRATIVE,
BY A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND.

IT is a delightful employment to trace and discover the operations of divine grace, as they are manifested in the dispositions and lives of God's real children. It is peculiarly gratifying to observe how frequently among the poorer classes of mankind, the sunshine of mercy beams upon the heart, and bears witness to the image of Christ which the Spirit of God has impressed thereupon. Among such the sincerity and simplicity of the Christian character appear unencumbered by those fetters to spirituality of mind and conversation, which too often prove a great hindrance to those who live in the higher ranks. Many are the difficulties which riches, polished society, worldly importance, and high connections, throw in the way of religious profession. Happy indeed it is, (and some such happy instances I know,) where grace has so strikingly supported its conflict with natural pride, self-importance, the allurements of luxury, ease, and wordly opinions, that the noble and mighty appear adorned with genuine poverty of spirit, self-denial, humblemindedness, and deep spirituality of heart.

But, in general, if we want to see religion in its purest character, we must look for it among the poor of this world, who are rich in faith. How often is the poor man's cottage the palace of God? Many of us can truly declare, that we have there learned our most valuable lessons of faith and hope, and there witnessed the most striking demonstrations of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God.

The character which the present narrative is designed to introduce to the notice of my readers, is given *from real life and circumstance*: I first became acquainted with her, through the receiving of the following letter, which I transcribe from the original now before me.

REV. SIR,

I take the liberty to write to you. Pray excuse me, for I have never spoken to you. But I once heard you when you preached at——church. I believe you are a faithful preacher to warn sinners to flee from the wrath that will be revealed against all those that live in sin, and die impenitent. Pray go on in the strength of the Lord. And may he bless you, and crown your labour of love with success, and give you souls for your hire.

The Lord has promised to be with those that he does call and send forth to preach his word, to the end of time, for without him we can do nothing. I was much rejoiced to hear of those marks of love and affection to that poor soldier of the S. D. militia. Surely the love of Christ sent you to that poor man; may that love ever dwell richly in you by faith. May it constrain you to seek the wandering souls of men with the fervent

desire to spend, and be spent for his glory. May the unction of the Holy Spirit attend the word spoken by you with power, and convey keen conviction to the hearts of your hearers. May many of them experience the divine change of being made new creatures in Christ.

Sir, be fervent in prayer with God for the conviction and conversion of sinners. His power is great, and who can withstand it? He has promised to answer the prayer of faith, that is put up in his Son's name, "Ask what ye will, it shall be granted you." How this should strengthen our faith when we are taught by the word and the Spirit how to pray! O! that sweet inspiring hope! how it lifts up the fainting spirits, when we look over all the precious promises of God. What a mercy, if we know Christ and the power of his resurrection in our own hearts! Through faith in Christ we rejoice in hope, and look up in expectation of that time drawing near, when all shall know and fear the Lord, and when a nation shall be born in a day.

What a happy time, when Christ's kingdom shall come! then shall 'his will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.' Men shall be daily fed with the manna of his love, and delight themselves in the Lord all the day long.—Then what a paradise below will they enjoy! How it animates and enlivens my soul with vigour to pursue the ways of God, that I may bear some humble part in giving glory to God and the Lamb!

Sir, I began to write this on Sunday, being detained from attending on public worship. My dear and only sister, living as a servant with Mrs.——, was so ill, that I came here to attend in her place and on her. But now she is no more.

I was going to entreat you to write to her in answer to this; she being convinced of the evil of her past life, and that she had not walked in the

ways of God, nor sought to please him. But she earnestly desired to do so. This makes me have a comfortable hope, that she is gone to glory, and that she is now joining in safe concert with the angelic host in heaven to sing the wonders of redeeming love. I hope I may now write, "Blessed is the dead that dies in the Lord."

She expressed a desire to receive the Lord's Supper, and commemorate his precious death and sufferings. I told her, as well as I was able, what it was to receive Christ into her heart; but as her weakness of body increased, she did not mention it again. She seemed quite resigned before she died. I do hope she is gone from a world of death and sin to be with God for ever.

Sir, I hope you will not be offended with me, for a poor ignorant person to take such a liberty to write to you. But I trust, as you are called to instruct sinners in all the ways of God, you will bear with me, and be so kind to answer this ill wrote letter, and give me some instructions. It is my heart's desire to have the mind that was in Christ, that when I awake up in his likeness, then I may be satisfied.

My sister expressed a wish that you might bury her. The minister of our parish, whither she will be carried, cannot come. She will lay at——. She died on Tuesday morning, and will be buried on Friday or Saturday, (which ever is most convenient you) at three o'clock in the afternoon. Please to send an answer by the bearer, to let me know whether you can comply with this request,

From your unworthy Servant,
ELIZABETH W——.

I was much struck with the simple and earnest strain of devotion which this letter breathed. It was but indifferently written and spelt. But this the rather tended to endear the hitherto unknown writer, as it seemed characteristic of the union of hum-

pleness of station with eminence of piety. I felt quite thankful that I was favoured with a correspondent of this description; the more so, as such characters were at that time very rare in the neighbourhood. I have often wished that epistolary intercourse of this kind was more encouraged and practised among us. I have the greater reason to speak well of its effects both on myself and others. Communication, by letter as well as by conversation, with the pious poor, has often been the instrument of animating and reviving my own heart in the midst of duty, and of giving me the most profitable information for the general conduct of the ministerial office.

As soon as the letter was read, I inquired who was the bearer of it.

"He is waiting at the outside of the gate, Sir;" was the reply.

I went out to speak to him, and saw a venerable old man, whose long hoary hair and deeply wrinkled countenance commanded more than common respect. He was resting his arm and head upon the gate; the tears were streaming down his cheeks. On my approach he made a low bow, and said,

"Sir, I have brought you a letter from my daughter; but I fear you will think us very bold in asking you to take so much trouble."

"By no means," I replied; "I shall be truly glad to oblige you and any of your family in this matter, provided that it is quite agreeable to the minister of your parish."

"Sir, he told me yesterday, that he should be very glad if I could procure some gentleman to come and bury my poor child for him, as he lives five miles off, and has particular business on that day: so when I told my daughter, she asked me to come to you, Sir, and bring that letter, which would explain the matter."

I desired him come into the house, and then said,

"What is your occupation?"

"Sir, I have lived most of my days in a little cottage at ———, six miles from here. I have rented a few acres of ground, and kept a few cows, which, in addition to my day labour, has been my means of supporting and bringing up my family."

"What family have you?"

"A wife, now getting very aged and helpless, one son, and one daughter; for my other poor dear child is just departed out of this wicked world."

"I hope for a better."

"I hope so too; poor thing, she did not use to take to such good ways as her sister; but I do believe that her sister's manner of talking with her before she died was the means of saving her soul. What a mercy it is to have such a child as mine is! I never thought about my own soul seriously till she, poor girl, begged and prayed me to flee from the wrath to come."

"What are the ages of your children?"

"My son is thirty-five, my daughter is about thirty, and my poor child that is dead was twenty-seven."

"And how old are you?"

"Turned seventy, and my wife is older: we are getting old and almost past our labour, but our daughter has left a good place, where she lived in service, on purpose to come home and take care of us and our little dairy. "And a dear dutiful, affectionate girl she is."

"Was she always so?"

"No, Sir; when she was very young, she was all for the word, and pleasure, and dress, and company.—Indeed, we were all very ignorant, and thought if we took care for this life, and wronged nobody, we should be sure to go to heaven at last. My daughters were both wilful, and, like ourselves, were strangers to the ways of God and the word of his grace. But the eldest of them wen

out to service, and some years ago she heard a sermon preached at — church, by a gentleman that was going to —, as chaplain to the colony, and from that time she became quite an altered creature. She began to read the Bible, and became quite sober and steady. The first time she came home afterwards to see us, she brought us a guinea, which she had saved from her wages, and said, as we were getting old, she was sure we should want help; adding, that she did not wish to spend it in fine clothes, as she used to do, only to feed pride and vanity. She would rather show gratitude to her dear father and mother, and this, she said, because Christ had shown such mercy to her.

“We wondered to hear her talk, and took great delight in her company, for her temper and behaviour were so humble and kind, she seemed so desirous to do us good both in soul and body, and was so different from what we had ever seen her before, that, careless and ignorant as we had been, we began to think there must be something real in religion, or it never could alter a person so much in a little time.

“Her younger sister, poor soul, used to laugh and ridicule her at that time, and said her head was turned with her new ways. ‘No, sister,’ she would say, ‘not my *head*, but I hope my *heart* is turned from the love of sin to the love of God. I wish you may one day see, as I do, the danger and vanity of your present condition.’

‘Her poor sister would reply, ‘I do not want to hear any of your preaching: I am no worse than other people, and that is enough for me.’—‘Well, sister,’ Elizabeth would say, ‘if you will not hear me, you cannot hinder me from praying for you, which I do with all my heart.’

‘And now, Sir, I believe those prayers are answered. For when her sister was taken ill, Elizabeth went

to Mrs. ———’s, to wait in her place, and take care of her. She said a great deal to her about her soul, and the poor girl began to be so deeply affected, and sensible of her past sin, and so thankful for her sister’s kind behaviour, that it gave her great hopes indeed for her sake. When my wife and I went to see her as she lay sick, she told us how grieved and ashamed she was of her past state; but said, she had a hope through grace that her dear sister’s Saviour would be her Saviour too; for she saw her own sinfulness, felt her own helplessness, and only wished to cast herself upon Christ as her hope and salvation.

‘And now, Sir, she is gone, and I hope and think her sister’s prayers for her conversion to God have been answered. The Lord grant the same for her poor father and mother’s sake likewise.’

This conversation was a very pleasing commentary upon the letter which I had received, and made me anxious both to comply with the request, and to become acquainted with the writer. I promised the good old Dairyman to attend on the Friday at the appointed hour; and after some more conversation respecting his own state under the present trial, he went away.

He was a reverend old man; his furrowed cheeks, white locks, weeping eyes, bent shoulders, and feeble gait, were characteristic of the old pilgrim; and as he slowly departed, supported by a stick, which seemed to have been the companion of many a long year, a train of reflection occurred, which I retrace with emotion and pleasure.

At the appointed hour, I arrived at the church; and after a little while, was summoned to meet at the church-yard gate a very decent funeral procession. The aged parents, the brother and the sister, with other relatives, formed an affecting group. I was struck with the humble, pious, and pleasing countenance of the young

woman from whom I received the letter. It bore the marks of great seriousness without affectation, and of much serenity mingled with a glow of devotion.

A circumstance occurred during the reading of the burial service, which I think it right to mention, as one among many testimonies, of the solemn and impressive tendency of our truly evangelical liturgy.

A man of the village, who had hitherto been of a very careless, and even profligate character, came into the church through mere curiosity, and with no better purpose than that of a vacant gazing at the ceremony. He came likewise to the grave, and during the reading of those prayers which are appointed for that part of the service, his mind received a deep, serious conviction of his sin and danger, through some of the expressions contained therein. It was an impression that never wore off, but gradually ripened into the most satisfactory evidence of an entire change, of which I had many and long-continued proofs. He always referred to the burial service, and to some particular sentences of it, as the clearly ascertained instrument of bringing him, through grace, to the knowledge of the truth.

The day was therefore one to be remembered. Remembered let it be by those who love to hear "the short and simple annals of the poor."

Was there not a manifest and happy connection between the circumstances that providentially brought the serious and the careless to the same grave on that day together? How much do *they* lose who neglect to trace the leadings of God in providence, as links in the chain of his eternal purpose of redemption and grace!

While infidels may scoff, let us *re.*"

After the service was concluded, I had a short conversation with the old couple and their daughter.

Her aspect and address were highly interesting. I promised to visit their cottage; and from that time became well acquainted with them. Let us bless the God of the poor, and pray continually that the poor may become rich in faith, and the rich be made poor in spirit.

[To be continued]

FOR THE

Lap-Man's Magazine.

At the present day, when the profession of christianity brings with it no persecutions, we have little idea of that strength of faith which could cheerfully endure torments and death, for the sake of the gospel.—We, forsooth, hardly thank God for our privileges, so secure are we from opposition in the exercise of them.—In ancient times it was not so. Then, to be known as a christian, was to be known as a criminal, and to acknowledge Christ Jesus, was to court the blow of the executioner.

In order to test the efficiency of our principles, we ought frequently to look at the sufferings of our predecessors. Are we like them? Could we endure their trials? According to our day is our strength, but do we feelingly know how to obtain that strength which could support us thro' the flames of martyrdom? These are profitable queries.

In order to shew our readers the value of their privilege, and to enable them to institute a comparison, by which they may decide whether they have any thing of the true christian spirit, we propose giving from time to time some account of the best men of ancient days, especially of those who sealed their faith with their blood. Our materials for this will be drawn from sources of acknowledged authenticity.

The sufferings of our Divine Redeemer, were but a precursor to those his followers were to bear. This was

proved by the martyrdom of Stephen, by the buffetings and imprisonments of the Apostles, and by the fiery spirit of intolerance exercised toward all christians, whatever were their age or sex.

The first of the twelve Apostles who suffered martyrdom was James, the son of Zebedee. Antiquity relates an anecdote which occurred at his death worthy of observation.

"The man who had drawn him before the tribunal, when he saw the readiness with which he submitted to martyrdom, was struck with remorse, and, by one of those sudden conversions, not infrequent amidst the remarkable outpourings of the spirit, was himself turned from the power of Satan to God, and confessed Christ with cheerfulness. They were both led to execution, and in the way the accuser requested the Apostles' forgiveness, which he soon obtained.—James turning to him answered,—Peace be to thee, and kissed him, and they were beheaded together."

The other James, suffered martyrdom about the year 62. On account of his singular innocence and integrity, he received from his countrymen the Jews, the name of Just. He was the head of the church at Jerusalem, where he was providentially preserved thro' many persecutions. At length however the malice of the Jews was roused against him. "The great men were uneasy on account of the vast increase of christian converts, by his means, and endeavoured to entangle him by persuading him to mount a pinnacle of the temple, and to speak to the people assembled at the time of the passover, against christianity. James, being placed aloft, delivered a frank confession of Jesus, as then sitting at the right hand of power, and who should come in the clouds of heaven. Upon this Ananias and the rulers were highly incensed. To disgrace his character was their first intention. This had failed. To mur-

der his person was the next, and the attempt was of much more easy execution. Crying out, that Justus himself was seduced, they threw him down and stoned him. The Apostle had strength to fall on his knees and to pray, "I beseech thee, Lord God and Father, for them, for they know not what they do." One of the priests moved with the scene cried out, "cease, what do you mean? this just man is praying for you." A person present with a fuller's club beat out his brains and thus completed his martyrdom."

Paul, the Apostle, seems to have labored with unwearied activity from about the year 36 to the year 63, that is from his conversion to the period in which St. Luke finishes his history. Within this period he wrote fourteen Epistles which will be the blessed means of feeding the souls of the faithful to the end of time. The second epistle to Timothy is supposed to have been written during his two years imprisonment at Rome. From this Epistle it is evident that he had already been called before Nero, agreeably to the prediction "Thou must be brought before Caesar." Here the Lord "stood with him and strengthened him." He was enabled to testify for Christ and his gospel, before Nero, with the same frankness, fortitude and eloquence that he had done before Felix, Festus and Agrippa. He was, as he owns, "delivered from the mouth of the Lion."

He obtained his liberty about the year 63. After this he is supposed to have visited some of the churches. He returned to Rome, and there suffered martyrdom, about the year 65—He was slain with the sword by Nero's order.

St. Peter is supposed to have suffered martyrdom, at the same time with St. Paul. He was crucified with his head downwards, a kind of death which he himself desired, most pro-

ably from an unfeigned humility, that he might not die in the same manner as his Lord had done.

Peter's wife had been called to martyrdom, a little before himself. He saw her led to death, and rejoiced in the grace of God vouchsafed to her, and addressing her by name, exhorted and comforted her with, remember the Lord.

He seems to have lived long in a state of matrimony, and from the account of Clement, one of his contemporaries, was industrious in the education of his children.

Asia minor was the great theatre of the Apostle John's ministry, particularly Ephesus, the care of which church remained with him after the decease of the rest of the Apostles.

While he resided at Ephesus, going once to bathe there, and perceiving that Cerinthus, an Infidel, was in the bath he came out again hastily — Let us flee says he, lest the bath should fall, while Cerinthus an enemy of truth is within. Thus decidedly did he testify against those who denied his Lord and Master.

Tertullian informs us that by order of the Emperor Domitian, St. John was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, and came out again unhurt.

This miracle softened not the heart of Domitian. He banished him into the solitary isle of Patmos where he was favored with the visions of the Apocalypse. After Domitians' death he returned from Patmos and governed the Asiatic churches. There he remained till the time of Trajan. At the request of the Bishops, he went to the neighboring churches, partly to ordain pastors and partly to regulate the concerns of congregations. — At one place, in his tour, observing a remarkable handsome young person, he warmly recommended him to the care of a particular pastor. The young man was baptized, and for a time lived as a christian. But being gradually corrupted by company, he

became idle, intemperate, and at length so dishonest, as to become a captain of a band of robbers. Sometime after, John had occasion to enquire of the pastor concerning the young man, who told him that he was now dead to God, and inhabited a mountain over against his church. John, in the vehemence of his charity, went to the place, and exposed himself to be taken by the robbers. Bring me, says he, to your captain, who beheld him coming. As soon as he knew the Apostle, he was struck with shame and fled. The aged Apostle following him cried, my son, why fliest thou from thy father unarmed and old? Fear not, as yet there remaineth hope of salvation. Believe me, Christ hath sent me. Hearing this the young man stood still, trembled, and wept bitterly. John prayed, exhorted, and brought him back to the society of christians, nor did he leave him till he found him fully restored by divine grace.

When St. John was extremely old, and unable to say much in christian assemblies, "Children, love one another," was his constantly repeated sermon. Being asked why he told them only one thing, he answered that nothing else was needed.

St. John lived three or four years after his return to Asia. He was preserved, a blessing to the church of Christ, a pattern of charity and goodness to the advanced age of an hundred.

About the year of our Lord, 64, the city of Rome sustained a general conflagration. The Emperor Nero himself is supposed to have been the author of this. Though he was a man of the most abandoned profligacy, still he had sufficient sense of shame to endeavor to turn the odium of his guilt in this instance from himself. Therefore to appease the people, who charged him with his crime, he accused the christians. They were so generally hated by the Pagans that he thought

he might calumniate them with impunity. We can scarcely conceive how odious christianity was in those days. The historian Tacitus calls it a detestable superstition, which at first was suppressed and afterwards broke out afresh and spread not only thro' Judea the origin of the evil, but through the metropolis also, the common sewer in which every thing filthy and flagitious meets and spreads.

Now it was that the Romans legally persecuted the church for the first time. Says Tacitus "some persons were apprehended who confessed themselves christians, and by their evidence a great multitude afterwards, and they were condemned, not so much for the burning of Rome, as for being the enemies of mankind."—A strange charge truly!

Their execution was aggravated with insult. They were covered with skins of wild beasts and torn by dogs, were crucified and set on fire that they might serve for light in the night time. Nero offered his gardens for this spectacle, and exhibited the games of the circus. People could not however avoid pitying them, base and undeserving as they were in the eyes of Tacitus, because they suffered not for the public good, but to gratify the cruelty of a tyrant. It appears from a passage in Seneca, compared with Juvenal, that Nero ordered them to be covered with wax and other combustible materials, and that, after a sharp stake was put under their chin to make them continue upright, they were burnt alive to give light to the spectators.

We have no account how the people of God behaved under these sufferings. What we know of their behaviour in similar scenes, leaves us in no doubt of their being supported by the power of the Holy Ghost.

This persecution is supposed to have lasted about three or four years, as Nero died in 68.

The christians now enjoyed rest

until the reign of Domitian, who succeeded to the empire in the year 81. He in the early part of his reign made inquiry for such of the Jews as were descended from the royal line of David. They brought before him the grandsons of Jude the Apostle, cousin to our Lord. But when he perceived their poverty and lowliness, and found they looked for a kingdom not of this world, he dismissed them. Afterward, however, he renewed the horrors of Nero's persecution. He put to death the consul Flavius, Clemens, and many others, because they would not worship the Pagan Gods. Some he despoiled of their goods—Flavia Domitilla his relation, the wife of Clemens, he banished.

Thus, in the first century the imperial family furnished its martyrs.

Domitian was slain in 96.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

OH SAVIOUR! whom this holy morn,

*Gave to our world below ;
To wandering and to labour born,
To weakness and to woe !*

*Incarnate Word! by every grief,
By each temptation, tried ;
Who liv'd to yield our ills relief,
And to redeem us died !*

*If, gaily cloth'd and proudly fed,
In careless ease we dwell ;
Remind us of thy manger bed,
And lowly cottage cell.*

*If prest by penury severe,
In envious want we pine ;
May conscience whisper in our ear,
A poorer lot was thine !*

*From all the viewless snares of sin
Preserve us firm and free ;—
As thou like us hast grieved been,
May we rejoice with thee !*